



18TH EHEALTH NETWORK 12-13 NOVEMBER 2020, BRUSSELS, BELGIUM

COVER NOTE

6.1 Recommendations for the development of national digital health networks

1. Issue at stake

The origin of national digital networks is in the Commission Recommendation on Electronic Health Record Exchange Format.

To enhance the interoperability and security of national health systems and support the secure exchange of health data across borders, improvements on the relations of the eHealth ecosystem bodies should be done at national and EU levels. There is already developed a governance model that is supported by other EU bodies, such as eHDSI. More work should be done at national level to achieve a supportive, collaborative and sustainable governance model. Each Member State should set up a national digital health network (NDHN) involving representatives of the relevant competent national authorities and, where appropriate, regional authorities dealing with digital health matters and the interoperability of electronic health records, and security of networks and information systems, and the protection of personal data.

This document provides recommendations on how this supportive national governance could be. It should include the national representative of the eHealth Network; (b) national, or regional, authorities with clinical and technical competence for digital health matters; (c) supervisory authorities established under Article 51 of Regulation (EU) 2016/679; (d) competent authorities designated pursuant to Directive (EU) 2016/1148.

The results of discussions or consultations of the national digital health networks should be transmitted to the eHealth Network and to the Commission.

The eHealth Network has progressively discussed, and approved policy documents targeted for national level policy, but so far, eHealth Network provided concrete recommendations on national organizational architecture for eHealth in regard of National eHealth Contact Points.

Very different organisational arrangements exist across the Member States. Supporting activities of the eHealth Network demonstrate how this heterogeneity can influence cooperation activities. In this document, the role of governance is again emphasised as a critical step towards the implementation of interoperable solutions. A Joint Coordination Process is deemed necessary, as well as the "establishment" of National Digital Health Networks within the Member States.

2. Summary

A document on a set of recommendations has been elaborated and discussed in the subgroup of the eHealth Network. The purpose is to help the Member States in the setting up

of "interoperable" national networks that could operate in an interconnected manner, between Member States as well as between them and bodies and processes outlined under the Joint Coordination Process.

Purpose of recommendations:

1. To support the Member States to formulate decisions on the establishment of bodies or functions relevant to the development of a fruitful national eHealth ecosystem, if these do not already exist.
2. To map and consolidate the possible interdependencies and synergies between the different nodes of a NDHN in order to further improve its functioning, as well as collaboration with NDHN from other Member States.
3. To establish a common frame of reference to which all partners in the EU digital health ecosystem can refer when they think and act vis-à-vis national level topics regarding eHealth.

The eHealth Network is asked to reflect on the following three questions:

1. Do you already have a network of relevant organisations that could resemble a NDHN?
2. Should such NDHN of relevant organisations be in alignment with the model proposed by this document?
3. What do you foresee as the main challenges for the establishment of a common organizational framework for eHealth?

3. Format of procedure in the meeting

For discussion.

Members of the eHealth Network are invited to provide their reflections on the document.